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I wish to state as I begin, that I have learned in my study of Matthew 16:13-20, that what I now must do is nearly impossible. My immediate purpose is to exegete this small passage, or at least a part of it. But I have discovered that this passage, or any passage, cannot be lifted out of context, held up, coddled, adored, attacked historically, literally, existentially and still be expected to be the vessel of God's Word. Neither can one be a true exegete if he brings to his work preconceived notions and dogmas. In this latter case my choice of passages has been unfortunate, for if there is a "loaded" word in all of the Bible it is the word "kingdom." What word in the scriptures has incited more controversy than "church?" Exegeting my passage implies a knowledge of what Jesus meant when he referred to himself as "Son of Man." These words and concepts are very simply too far-reaching to be dealt with fairly in a work of this size. A wealth of material has been written on each, and of course I have not been able to read it all. I must, however, deal with them and make some decisions concerning them. Here at least allow me to affirm my humility before not only the magnificent work of generations of Biblical scholars, but also before the text itself.

This paper is the fruit of eight weeks of continuous labor; harder work than I have done or any single assignment in eight years of "higher education." I feel I have learned much; about how to approach the Bible, about the Church, and about myself. I deeply appreciate the opportunity and necessity of doing it.

I THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

As stated in the Introduction, it is a very elementary but profound truth that a Biblical text cannot be understood out of context. And while I feel some critics have allowed context to become the only means to interpretation, to the point of rendering God's Word irrelevant to modern lives, it still must be the beginning point of exegesis. This is particularly true with reference to Mt. 16:13-20 in that the passage appears only in the first gospel in its given form. At the risk of being guilty of over simplifying something that is not at all simple I make the following observations.

The Gospel of Matthew, as all writings of a proclaimatory-confessional-apologetic nature, was written in response to a need in a given situation. The need here was to so state the "good news" of Jesus Christ that it would fall upon responsive ears in the Jewish nation. The situation, of course, was the early Jewish-Christian Church; more specifically the church at Antioch. Peter, who I will discuss throughout the paper, plays a central role in the Matthean narrative; more so than in the other accounts. And because Peter was the leader of the Church at Antioch, becoming later almost a "Patron Saint" of that church, it would seem safe to assume that Antioch was the situation out of

which the gospel was written.

There are several characteristics of the first gospel that immediately distinguish it from the other synoptics. The "Jewishness: of the gospel, as compared to Luke, is obvious. The narrative begins with a genealogy, genetically relating Jesus to David, Jacob, Issac and Abraham, and thusly positing him squarely in the historical tradition of the people of God. The writer goes to all lengths to point out that Jesus was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and that everything he did had been promised by the prophets. While Paul is struggling with the problems the Jewish law created for the Gentile Christians in Galatia, Corinth and Rome, the writer of Matthew points out that Jesus is the fulfillment and embodiment of the law.. Some scholars have even pointed to the similarities between Moses giving the Law from Mt. Sinai, and Jesus proclaiming the "new law" in the Sermon on the Mt. In Luke the same incident occurs on the plain. Innumerable illustrations could be used to demonstrate the point which I think is both clear and accepted--that Matthew was written by a Jew for the purpose of persuading the Jews that Jesus Christ was the promised Messiah.

A second major characteristic of the gospel, and one of direct concern, is that it alone, among the few gospels contains the word "church" ( ). The Jewish nation had always been a religious community; the collective nouns, "nation, people, house, congregation" are liberally used to describe God's chosen race in the

Old Testament. The Messianic age in Jewish Eschatology would reproduce this community. That the Aramaic word here rendered was an Old Testament word is a definite possibility that I will exami examine later. Let it suffice now to assert that Matthew being the only witness to mention the Church is not incongruous with his function as a Jewish Christian, himself the son of the religious community of Israel.

The question of sources and authorship is a more difficult one; it too, however inadequately, must be mentioned. That the author of Matthew had a copy of Mark before him seems beyond doubt, 606 of the 661 verses in Mark appear in Matthew almost verbatum. There is also a block of material common to Matthew and Luke but not included in Mark. This material, mostly the sayings of Jesus, has been called the "Logia" or "Q." That this material was a single document, although long assumed, does not necessarily follow. In any case the writers of Mt. and Luke did have a common source of material unknown to Mark. There are, of course, portions of Matthew that are unique; e.g. Mt. 16:17-19, appearing in none of the other witnesses. This leads to the assertion that the writer had another source, known only to him. This source has been called "M."

That Matthew, (Levi) the tax collector wrote the gospel is doubtful. An eye witness to the life of Jesus would hardly have to rely on the word-for-word account of another writer. But that

Matthew had nothing to do with the writing is equally an unwarranted assumption. The account does bear his name, it does reflect the domestic difficulties of Christianity in a Jewish culture--of which he would have been acutely aware; and it does contain some passages totally different from any other account. Either these are the work of an eye witness or else they must be sheer fabrication. It is my humble opinion that the former is the case; that the gospel is indeed the content of that which was preached by Matthew; that it perhaps contains passages that he wrote down himself, but that the actual penning of the words and sentences was done by another Jewish Christian. Dating the gospel circa 80 A.D., this would seem to be a fair decision. References to the destruction of the temple and the church-consciousness make an earlier date unlikely, and provide further evidence that it was written after Matthew's death.

This then is what is needed before one can begin to examine a certain passage within the gospel narrative. In no sense of the word is it meant to be a definitive statement about Matthew. Each observation was made because of the relationship it has to the specific passage in question: Matthew 16:13-20.

II THE ENGLISH TEXT AND SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

Having seen some of the major characteristics of the Gospel in which the passage occurs; it is now necessary to examine the passage in light of the entirety of Biblical literature. Taking the risk of revealing later exegetical conclusions I hope to point out in what way the passage, and its central thoughts, relates to the rest of the Bible as a self-contained entity; in what ways it is an expression of a unique idea or a reformulation of a germinal idea existant in the Old Testament and Israelite tradition. From this point on I will attribute this passage to Matthew. When I designate him as author I mean the author of this passage, and not the entire Gospel.

In very general terms, this passage is a crucial and central event for Matthew. Having come into the district of Caesarea Philppi Jesus asks his disciples a rather astonishing question. The "feel" of the passage in context is one of crisis, end and beginning, change. After reading and rereading I find myself thinking that something is radically different once 16:13-20 has transpired. The relationship between Jesus and disciples has been altered; the old has come to an end, and out of the old must now grow something new.

The incident of Jesus' inquiring as to the popular conception of his identity appears in all three Synoptics. Matthew differs, however, in that Jesus refers to himself as "the Son of Man." Mark and Luke record his self reference only as "I." In Luke the occasion is different from Matthew; Luke describes Jesus praying alone, his disciples with him.

That the disciples' response to the question is an accurate reflection of his popular standing is proven by other witnesses. Herod, hearing about Jesus, suspected that it was John the Baptist raised from the dead (Mt. 14:2; Mk. 6:14-15). In Luke 9:7-8 the people say it is John, Elijah or a prophet. Herod consoles himself with the assurance that he has beheaded John the Baptist. The priests and levites, sent by the Jews confused John the Baptist with the Christ, Elijah, and the prophet. (Jn. 1:21)

But then Jesus, brushing aside all popular accounts, turns the question directly upon the disciples. "But who do you say that I am?" (Mt. 16:15) This, in my opinion, is the precise point of crisis. This question having been voiced, not by the disciples in speculation but by Jesus, comes through to me like a demand. For the disciples this was the proverbial "point of no return."

Peter as the group's spokesman, (throughout Mt.) replies: "You are theChrist, the Son of the living God." At a later point I will discuss the function of these two titles. It should be noted here, however, that while neither is an accepted, widely used mode of addressing Jesus, they are not totally new. In Matthew's genealogy we find the words "....and Jacob the father of Joseph

the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ." (Mt. 1:16) Jesus' raising of Lazarus prompts Martha's confession. "Yes Lord: I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world." (Jn. 11:27) Having just encountered Jesus, Nathanael says, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God....." (Jn. 1:49) That these titles had different meanings for the different people who employed them, or that they carried a fairly stable cultural meaning is a question that will be discussed.

Peter's magnificent affirmation had barely left his lips when Jesus conferred upon him the popular beatitude and certain specific powers. Again we encounter the problem of epistemology. "Blessed" is perhaps an inadequate translation of the Greek, although I feel that whatever is here conferred is similar to the "Blessedness" of Matt. 5:3-11. The question of Peter's name and the play upon the Aramaic and Greek words is indeed a complicated one. The names Peter and Cephas are used interchangeably throughout the New Testament. "Flesh and blood" was a popular Rabbinical idiom used liberally by Paul (I Cor. 15:20; Gal. 1:15-16; Eph. 6:12). The "keys" have definitive parallels in Isaiah 22:22; speaking of Eliakim, son of Hilkiah: "And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open," and in Revelation 1:18: "..... and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

Peter's powers of "binding and loosing" are given to all the disciples in Mt. 18:18. And in Jn. 20:23 the disciples are given the powers of "forgiving and retaining sins." But to argue that Jesus meant all the disciples in this instance is unwarranted. He is obviously talking to Peter.

The Messianic secret expression, "Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ." is common to Mark and occassionally appears in Mt. After cleansing a leper, Jesus tells him, "See that you say nothing to anyone...." (Mt. 8:4) In Mk. 3:12 Jesus orders the unclean spirits "not to make him known." Other clear statements of this motif are found in Mk. 1:44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:30; 9:9.

The positing of Peter as foundation of the church has not been mentioned in this section because there are no specific parallel texts. As stated before Matthew is the only gospel to use the word Church; and he uses it but three times: here and in 18:17. These facts understood, I still do not feel that Matthew here records Jesus expressing an alien concept. I will attempt, in my exposition to prove that "church" was indeed Biblical, and a quite natural and willful outgrowth of Jesus' ministry.

III THE GREEK TEXT

Translation, Analysis and Word Study

This section will attempt to deal with the text, and specific key words, as it is. Because there are so many different interpretations of the text and because so many scholars have considered it to be a revision or later addition to the original I have decided to consider these problems in separate sections.

Matthew 16:13-20

Trans. And when Jesus had come into the region of Caesarea of Philippi he asked his disciples saying, "Who are men saying the Son of Man is?"

1. 2nd Aorist, Active, Participle, Singular Masculine, Nominative

   to come; translated "had come" to indicate action occurring prior to the main verb, c.f. 2

2. Imperfect, Active, 3rd Person, Singular, Indicative

   to ask; translated simple past

3. Present, Active 3rd Person, Plural, Indicative

   to say; translated "are saying" to indicate present buy on-going action.

4. Infinitive of , I am
   Indirect discourse in the context of direct discourse, ie. Jesus' question.
   Subject in the accusative;

The text beginning with a geographical transition produces the general feeling of "uniqueness." All that has gone before is past; what is about to transpire will be different, important and critical. Without warning Jesus asks the question about the Son of Man; obviously he was referring to himself.

With great frustration I discovered that "Son of Man," like other key words and phrases in the text, has been a fertile field for exegetical and critical study. Here I first encountered the sheer impossibility of reading everything that has been written about the subject and the necessity of making decisions in lieu of limitdd knowledge. I have tried to choose only that material I consider best, using as much of it as possible in my interpretation.

It has been observed that the phrase "the Son of Man" occurs eighty one times in the gospels as a self-designation of Jesus. Never is Jesus' usage of the phrase questioned by disciples or opponents. The view of some scholars that "the Son of Man" was a messianic title in popular use seems to be unfounded. If their assumptions were true surely he would have been questioned about it. The whole tone of secrecy and hesitancy concerning Jesus Messiahship makes it highly improbable that he would use a popular messianic title as a self-identification.

In the Old Testament "Son of Man" is used synonymously with man. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Ps. 8:4 To address one as "son of man" seems only to be an affirmation of one's humanity. "Son of man"

is God's mode of addressing Ezekial (Ez. 2:1-etc.). Here the phrase "....suggests at once the littleness of the prophet as a man; and the greatness to which God calls him in his service; through him, man though he is, God speaks to men, and carries on his high purposes."[1] In Daniel the term is used apocalyptically.

Campbell notes that in the gospels the phrase is preceded by the article, while in every other Biblical occurrence, with the exception of Acts 7:56, the article is missing. Outside of the gospels, then, the phrase should read "a son of man" or "son of man" imperatively. That Jesus used the definite article leads me to think that he meant much more than simply man. He referred to "the" Son of Man; apparently there was no other in his mind. And so it is my conclusion; that "Son of Man" was not a popular messianic title; that "son of man" was synonymous with man for the Jews; but that Jesus meant more than man in suing the article. Any further conclusions would have to answer the question of Jesus' "mesaiah consciousness"--at subject that cannot be dealt with fairly here.

Verse 14

Trans. And they said, "Some are saying John the Baptist, others are saying Elijah, and other are saying Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

1. 2nd Aorist, Active, Indicative, 3rd Person, Plural to say

2. It would seem that the literal reading of
should be, "On the one hand they.....on the other hand
others." But, , used correlatively in
contrast may be translated simply "some.....others."[2]

3. saying - understood from vs. thirteen and translated to indicate present and ongoing action.

As stated before the disciples response seems to be a fairly accurate report on the popular conception of Jesus. The mention of Elijah is significant in that it was believed that he ascended bodily into heaven. Jeremiah was simply a great prophet. It must be noted that these are indeed complementary comparisons. Perhaps the disciples exaggerated in their response; perhaps the people were saying that he was a prophet and they, in their own mind, wre comparing him to Elijah et. al. This, of course, is just my speculation.

Verse 15

Trans. He said to them, "But who do you say I am?"

1. Present, Active, Indicative, 3rd Person, Singular
Historic present, translated past ("said" rather than "says")

to say

2. Present, Active, Indicative, 2nd Person, Plural
to say

3. Accusative of the personal pronoun "I"

4. Infinitive of I am
Same use as in vs. 13

This verse is a good example of Jesus' use of "the Son of Man" as a self-designation. In verse thirteen he used the phrase: here it is simply "I"

Verse 16

Trans. Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

1. Aorist, Indicative, 3rd Person, Singular of the deponent verb.

, to answer, reply

2. 2nd Aorist, Indicative, Active, 3rd Person, Singular to say

3. 2nd Person, Singular, Present Tense
I am

4. Present Participle, Genitive, Singular, Masculine
to live

The Gk. , simply means the "annointed one." It was an accepted practice in early Israelite tradition to annoint kings and high priests with oil. The annointing done by a prophet signified God's sanction, and at times more. Peter, speaking out of this tradition, surely used in this manner. As the early Christians used the term in reference to Jesus it took on renewed meaning. But the meaning was quickly lost as "Christ" became a proper name. There is generally very little use of the term in the gospels. Mark reports that Jesus claimed the title at his tril (Mk. 14:61f), but Mt. and Luke report him as refusing to answer the High Priest's question. In John Jesus is acknowledged as from the beginning. He claims the title once (Jn. 4:25f) and never attempts to conceal it in the manner described by Mk. and Mt.

This brings me again to the question of Jesus' "messianic consciousness," and I must confess that this study has only further confused me. On the one hand there is ample evidence that Jesus knew his identity and mission from the beginning; but on the other hand it seems at times as if he is not sure. Peter, in his Pentecost speech, seems to indicate that Jesus became the Christ after the crucifixion.

> "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has madehim both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." Acts 2:36 e.e. you crucified Jesus of Nazareth, but God has made him the Christ.

This argument casts real doubt on the authenticity of Matthew's report, a question I will discuss in a later section. Although a great deal more ought to be said I think Peter's confession is explained in the verses that follow. His refusal to accept the implications of his statement in the next passage 16:21-23 lead me to the conclusion that he did make the statement; but his understanding of "the Christ" was determined by the annointing tradition of Israel.

To the question of Jesus self-acknowledgement I quote Campbell again:

> "Unfortunately, this means that there is no sufficient evidence to show whether or not Jesus in fact believed himself to be the Messiah."[3]

Verse 17

Trans. Jesus answered and said to him, "You are fortunate (Blessed are you), Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed (disclosed) this to you but my Father who (is) in heaven."

1. c.f. vs. 16

2. the context this word had for Greek speaking Christians is a subject in and of itself. "Blessed" seems to have too many overtones of popular piety; "fortunate" does not convey the note of congratulation and joy that was probably intended. Professor Marcus Barth has suggested that "happy" would be an appropriate translation of in Mt. 5:3-11. It seems to me, however, that though happy may be appropriate in the context of the Beatitudes, here Jesus meant something much more. Peter's affirmation sprang from a source other than his own experience. He had been the object of Divine Revelation; therefore he was more than happy; perhaps even more than frtunate.

3. Bar-Jonah; son of Jonah

4. Aorist, Active, Indicative, 3rd Person, Singular to reveal, disclose. The verb is singular instead of plural because flesh and blood, " " are not two separate entities. Together they constitute a Rabinnical idiom that here means, "this has not come to you through the normal channels of reason and logic." That Peter did not come to this confession by his own reflective thinking is revealed in his apparent misunderstanding of his utterance. (Mt. 16:21-23)

Verse 18

Trans. "And I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not be victorious over it."

1. proper name - Peter

2. rock

3. Future, Active, Indicative, First, Person, Singular to build, construct (may be used literally or figuratively as in this verse).

4. From Hades, underworld, of the dead

5. Future, Active, Indicative, 3rd Person, Plural
q be dominant, prevail; with the genitive it can be translated "win a victory over, be victorious"

That this is the instance of the naming of Simon Peter is held by some scholars and denied by others. H.D.A. Major thinks that the passage explains how Simon got the name Peter. T.V. Manson, in the same book gives evidence to the argument by pointing out that Jesus also gave the nickname "sons of thunder," as a playful rebuke to the tempers of two of his disciples.[4] On the other hand C.G. Montefiore assumes that Simon already had the name Peter ( ).[5] I would have to side with the former argument but qualify it by my uncertaintity that the "naming" took place on this specific occassion.

The name itself is quite interesting. The word Kepha ; Aramaic for "rock" or "stone" was probably the word which Jesus used. It is in no sense a common name--but here used as a descriptive title. The Greek transcribers used the Aramaic word in some instances, (Cephas) but in others translated it to the Gk. , which also means "rock." The play upon and is then a witty linguistic maneuver hidden in the English text. Peter has become, like a common name; but Cullman points out that to really undetstand what Jesus said the name should read "Simon Rock."[6] The question of whether Simon was the Rock or his confession will be discussed in the final section. But even at this point it is rather hard to imagine that Jesus meant anything other than that which he so adequately stated; that Simonis the

Rock. "Rock" itself is a word frequently used in the Old Testament to indicate God's constancy, changelessness and protection, c.f. I Isaiah 32:2; Deut. 32:4. When the word occurs in the New Testament it must be understood in light of this earlier significance.

In discussing the appearance of the word "church" I will comment this point only on the meaning the word had for those who used and heard it. Further comment will be given in the interpretative section. Again the precise content the word includedis highly disputed. Cullman sums up one side of the argument: "Above all, the Jewish Messianic expectation includes the conception of a Messianic community and is inconceivable without it."[7] Cullman argues against those who think Jesus is here initiating a new concept; or that the words were added at a later date by the church by saying that ( ) belongs in the Jewish sphere. Gahal and Kenushta; "people of God"--were concepts quite common to the Jews of the time. Cullman warns that, "It is not right to start from a later concept of the and then conclude that it cannot possibly be ascribed to Jesus."[8] If Jesus had any "Messianic consciousness," and he surely did, it is incongruous to assume that consciousness existed apart from a "people of God" context. This of course is a question of Christology; and some, e.g. Bultmann, have denied Jesus' Messianic consciousness and lent credence to the speculation that he intended no community, no people, no church.

Although the word occurs only two more times in the Gospels (Mt. 18) Jesus did refer to the community on other occasions, e.g. Mt. 26:31-"flock;" Lk. 12:32-"little flock."

Flew points out that the Aram. Kenushta, the word that Jesus more than likely used, primarily meant the local Jewish Community; and that it could have meant the "Messianic remnant."9 I think Cullman makes the definitive statement however, when in reference to Mt. 16, Mt. 11:4 and 10:7 he says, "For here it becomes dear that for Jesus not only his own coming but also the existence and the work of the group of disciples is already the fulfillment and in-breaking of the time of redemption."10

Verse 19

Trans. "I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind upon the earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose upon the earth will have been loosed in heaven" 1

1. Future, Active, INdicative, First Person, Singular
   to give

2. anything used for locking; i.e. a key

3. whatever; indicates future condition with the subjunctive

4. Present, Active, Subjunctive, 2nd Person, Singular
   to bind or tie, literally or figuratively

5. will have been bound
   Future, active, Indicative, 3rd Person Singular
   Perfect, Passive, Participle, Nominative Singular, Neuter

"The Greek perfect tense denotes the present state resultant upon a past action" - J. Gresham Machem
New Testament Greek for Beginners
MacMillan Co. New York, 1961, pp.187.

Peter's binding and loosing on earth will simultaneously affect a binding and loosing in heaven. There will exist in heaven a state of boundness as the result of Peter's binding. As much as I would like to translate this differently, a careful study of words and tenses makes this the only possibility.

6. Present, active, Subjunctive, 2nd Person, Singular to loose

7. Perfect Passive Participle, Nominative, Singular Neuter, cf. 5

The exact relationship between "kingdom" and "church" has been difficult for me to understand. It would seem, at first, that the two are totally unrelated but the more the passage is read as a unity the less this initial observation makes sense. "Kingdom of heaven" was an idiom frequently used to avoid saying the name of the Lord. The question of the time and space location of the kingdom of heaven involves the whole of Jewish eschatalogical thinking:- a subject infinitely too complex to discuss here. Even were this a possibility we have no assurance that Jesus was here speaking as a Jewish eschatologist.

The prophet David had vividly symbolized the apocalyptic kingdom; the Zealots saw the kingdom as the reestablishment of Israel to its once mighty stature under the Davidic and Solomonic monarchies. That Jesus meant any of this is highly dubious in my mind. Likewise I am forced to observe that church and kingdom must be related if they are not synonmous.

W.C. Allen states that the is not the kingdom. Peter's keys are to that which will come with the Son of Man when

he returns upon the clouds of heaven. The church was the community of those who were to wait for the kingdom, announce it when it came, a and Peter--with the other disciples would hold positions of leadership in it when it came. The powers of "binding and loosing" are legal authority to forbid and permit and are to be wielded not only by Peter--but by all the disciples.[11]

Flew thinks the power of the keys is part of discipleship and does not necessarily mean authority in ecclesiastical affairs. "The key is the spiritual insight which will enable Peter to lead others in through the door of revelation through which he has passed himself."[12]

I hesitate to draw final conclusions here but I feel a minimum can be said. Peter was definetly given certain powers in the kingdom. Whether the kingdom meant the church I cannot say for sure; but that they are related I am certain. Peter's powers then are earthly powers, granted and sanctioned by God. That they are eternal, or that they apply to his successors--are unwarranted assumptions.

Verse 20

Trans. Then he warned the disciples that they should not tell anyone that he was the Christ.

1. Aorist, Active, Indicative, 3rd Person, Singular to rebuke, reprove; when followed by "warned." "Strictly charged" seems to free. Was it a charge or a warning?

2. with the subjunctive indicates exhortation

3. 2nd Aorist, Active, Subjunctive, 3rd Person, Sing.
I am

Employment of the "Historic Present" allows this to be translated "was" instead of "is." (lit)

I think this statement was made for two reasons. Firstly the disciples didn't understand what was meant by the Christ. This is illustrated by the passage that follows (Mt. 16:21-23). It would be better for them to say nothing than to announce a Christ they did not begin to understand. Secondly, the terseness of the statement, its abrupt interruption, leads me to think that there were immediate reasons why they should tell no one. The word translated "strictly charged" by the R.S.V., in my mind, should be "warned" as I have indicated. In this sense it is possible that physical danger was imminent if the disciples should go about proclaiming Jesus as the Christ at that time.

As I conclude this section I wish again to express my feelings of frustration. I have chosen what I felt were the most crucial words; and in each case these words have involved volume after volume and centuries of debate. In that it is possible I have attempted to sift and measure that which I read--and come to the conclusion that I felt I was able to make.

IV THE AUTHENTICITY OF MATTHEW 16:13-20

For many scholars the authenticity of Matt. 16:13-20 is highly questionable. A rough categorization of the arguments would be as follows. A. Those who think that neither Jesus nor Matthew said it; but that it was added to the text at a later date. B. Those who think Jesus never said it exactly--but that Matthew, interpreting Jesus thoughts, composed it. C. Those who think that Jesus said it but that the writer has located it in a different context from the actual occurrence. D. Those who think the text is true literally between C. and D.

Of the critics I read almost two to one argued against the authenticity of the passage. I shall try to summarize briefly some of the best of their arguments.

Almost every critic notes that Matthew alone records the occurrence in this manner. It is not uncommon for the Evangelists to differ in their accounts; but the question can be legitimately asked:-how something of this importance was not reported by Mark and Luke.

> "It is difficult to understand how Mark and Luke could omit this part of the story if they knew it, or how they could have failed to know it if Jesus really did reply in this way."[13]

Other critics point out that Matthew has obviously added to the Markan text for the purpose of glorifying Peter. They point to the cycle of "Petrine stories" characeristic of Matthew; and the general concensus is that these stand on a lower historical level than Mark and "Q." Of all the commentators I read, T.W. Manson has dealt with the question most fairly. He states all the argu - ments against the passage, gives answer to most of them; and then decides against the passage. In that he has summarized the argu- ments so thoroughly I will use his outline and add my own comments.[14]

1. Absence of Gospel Parallels. As Manson points out this alone signifies nothing. The source of real suspicion lies in the fact that there are similar passages in Mk. and Luke but both fail to mention Peter's powers and the Church. This argument is further strengthened by the fact that Luke, author of Luke-Acts, knew the word , and in fact used it in Acts, but not in Luke.

2. Kingdom vs. Church Jesus and his followers expected the coming of the kingdom so he couldn't have founded a church. This is valid assuming that kingdom and church are different--and even hostile concepts. But in my mind; the establishment of the church and the giving of the keys, practically simultaneously, indicates that the two are indeed closely related. Both concepts are possible in the context of Israel:-a people of God, now a religious community; but also a community awaiting an act of God, in the coming Messiah, that would usher in the kingdom.

3. Historical Results If the verses were actual utterances of Jesus, Peter would have enjoyed the place of prominence in the church which, in fact, he did not. cf. Acts 11:2 and Gal. 2:11. This argument ignores the fact that the same powers were given to the twelve, as disciples; and that as a disciple Peter did play a prominent rob in the early church.

4. Peter and Rock Peter's unstable personality could hardly be likened to a rock. This argument assumes quite blatantly, that we know Peter better than Jesus did. Even if Jesus made the statement on the character of Peter, which I think is dubious, this question is a bit too arrogantly presumptuous.

5. The primacy of Peter over the twelve conflicts with the other sayings of Jesus. Mt. 19:28 mentions the disciples occupying twelve thrones in the Kingdom; there is no mention of one being more prestigious than another. In Mk. 10:35-45 the Sons of Zebedee ask Jesus for a place of prominence in the Kingdom. His blunt refusal says nothing about Peter already occupying the position of prominence, but is a rebuttal to the audacious asking. This argument also overlooks Mt. 18:18; and the more important fact that Peter commonly spoke for--and was spoken to, as a representative of the twelve.

6. The silence of the early Church Fathers. Manson points out that some critics have felt this notorious silence to be proof that the passage was a later addition. But, as he argues, the problems existent in the early church had nothing to do with the passage: "The primacy of Peter would not be a useful weapon against Gnosticism, for example."[15]

Manson does not regard the passage as a genuine utterance of Jesus. He does, however, feel that it was of early Palestine origin. He documents his argument by referring to the dispute between Paul and the "Petrine Party" described in I Corinthians." "In view of the facts we may conjecture that the kind of claim for Peter which we have in Mt. 16:18 was being pressed in the fifties of the first century, and that Paul is resisting it when he writes I Corinthians."[16] Manson speculates that the elevation of Peter by the Palestine church was meant to act as "some kind of check on Paul." This I think is the most plausible explanation of the passage's origin from those who deny its authenticity.

W.C. Allen urges against authenticity, citing instances in Mt. where the other eleven disciples are cast in an unfavorable light. "It is, therefore, possible that 16:17-19 are in their present order and connection the work of the Evangelist compiling detached sayings in honour of the great apostle."[17]

C.G. Montefiore, likewise doubts the authenticity of the passage on the grounds that the following dispute in Mt. 18, inexplicable if Peter's supremacy had been so clearly stated.[18] An interesting argument against is that of Th. Zahn, quoted by Cullman. Zahu thinks the passage has been mistranslated into Greek, and that it originally was stated; "I say to you, yes to you, Peter; on this rock I will build my church." This is, of course, a very appealing conclusion; but assuming that we can deduce what Jesus <u>really</u> said is indeed questionable business.

Cullman and Flew argue for authenticity with some qualifications. The former discards the argument basing its judgement on this sole mention of church and in so doing directs a barb at Bultmann et. al. by saying "How many pearls we would have to discard as from Jesus' Sermon the Mount--to name only this one example--if we were to let ourselves be girded by this principle.[19]" Cullman concludes that the passage is of very early origin; that with the exception of the naming of Peter, the event did happen; but that it happened later in Jesus' ministry--perhaps at the Last Supper. His time argument is particularly convincing as he points out that the story could hardly have originated after Peter no longer stood at the head of the Jerusalem Church.

FLew underscores quite adequately the obvious early origin of the passage by citing that the beatitude, the use of Simon's Father's name, the rabbinical idiom "binding and loosing," the implied eschatology in the struggle against the "gates of Hades" all are characteristic of the first half of the first century.[20]

I have reported both sides of this discussion simply because I think it irresponsible for a student to make a judgment (especially in the matter of authenticity) until he has contemplated the relative merits of decisions made by scholars imminently more qualified than he. Having done this I am even more hesitant to voice an opinion. But in that a decision in this matter is the sole determining factor in a discussion of interpretation I will climb slowly out on the proverbial limb.

In my mind none of the critics argued convincingly against the authenticity of the passage. I felt that some, especially the older works, revealed an overt distaste for the passage and its traditional Roman Catholic interpretation. Where all traditional interpretations were thrown to the wind; and an attempt made to determine what the statement meant in the historical context in which it supposedly occurred the arguments against authenticity grew less and less convincing.

I believe the gospel according to Matthew renders a fairly accurate account of an event that did happen in the midst of Jesus' ministry. I think there is no cultic or literary argument that destroys the authenticity; but find most to bypass major issues, picking and chhosing materials that lend weight to the argument against. In short, after studying the passage and those who have studied it, I have no reason to doubt its authenticity.

This study has, however, sharpened a problem that goes much deeper than the question of the authenticity of Mt. 16:13-20. It is a question that presented itself at the outset of my Theological education; a question to which I have a different answer daily. It is "At what point does the exegete (specifically the exegete who must preach 52 sermons a year) lay aside the tools of form, historical and literary criticism, and in integrity preach the Gospel as it is presented in the New Testament?" Put another way: "Where is the approach that rises above slavish fundamentalism and yet stops short of a "Bultmannism castration" of the scriptures?"

I cannot question the historical accuracy of this passage without historically questioning the whole Bible; an endeavor which I presently feel is not even relevant. The Bible is not a book of history; but if events like the one here discussed, never happened our Faith and Church rests on shaky foundations. As stated I do not have an answer--only a hope that an answer will come.

V EXPOSITION AND CONCLUSIONS

Interpretations of Mt. 16:13-20 have traditionally fallen into one of two categories. Both interpretations are succintly stated by authors contributing to the same book; I quote them, therefore, as representatives:

> "This blessing would seem to explain how Simon got the name of Peter or the Rock Man. It is because Jesus declares to Simon that he will found His Church upon the rock of Simon's confession of Him as the Christ. This must be the meaning of this much disputed passage."[21]

> "The obvious intention of the verse is that we should understand Peter himself to be the rock." Other interpretations ".....have to be forced upon the text."[22]

As stated previously most scholars line up somewhere behind the first statement. I found it extremely ironical that most adherents of the "rock-confession" view even those who spent considerable time proving the unreliability of the passage. It is as if they were unsatisfied to have mortally wounded the passage--and continued on stabbing until there is no chance of life remaining. The epitome of this endeavor I found in the International Critical Commentary to which I have referred. In a paraphrase of the passage Allen portrays Peter as a very lucky person, whose responsibilities are likened to a business manager of a contemporary country club. Perhaps I am guilty of understating the problems of Biblical exegesis--but I am left with one of two alternatives.

Either Jesus never said these words to Peter, and some one later inserted them into the text; in which case we should do well to ignore them as much as possible; or else Jesus did say them, and in saying them meant exactly what he said; in which case the passage is one of the most important in the Bible--deserving of our continued study and emphasis. In concluding may paper I will proceed from the latter alternative.

The importance of this passage is illustrated in the immediacy with which Jesus turns the question upon the disciples. After having asked what other people think about him, he forces the disciples, those who have been with him day and night, to come to some kind of conclusion themselves about who he was. Peter speaks immediately, without explanation, using words that apparently had meaning to all who were there. Because of his response to the Question he is congratulated by Jesus--but told also that what he has just affirmed was not the result of hard-headed logic but a revelation from God. Thusly, the attention is driven away from Peter as the source of this wonderful confession; to God, who alone can reveal to a man the true meaning of the Christ. In light of this, and that which follows (Mt. 16:21-23) the argument of those who argue that (1.) the passage is a Matthean Petrine story; (2.) the rock is Peter's faith, makes no sense. It isn't Peter's faith--but an insight revealed to him by God. Immediately there after Peter shows just how shallowhis personal understanding of the Messiah is. Having confessed that Jesus was the Christ, Peter

does demonstrated that he had no idea what that meant; (or at least what it meant to Jesus0, as he rebuked Jesus for telling of his coming suffering and death. The problems in accusing Matthew of glorifying Peter are glaring in that Matthew reports that Jesus harshly rebuked Peter; (Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men"-Mt. 16:23) after having bestowed on him the beatitude and the powers.

Most scholars interept the words "church" and "kingdom" as distinct and perhaps even hostile concepts. After studying the passage I am not so certain the distinction really exists. I have already stated why I think ( ) was a natural result of Jesus' ministry. God's first covenant was with a "people." The new covenant would likewise be made with a "people," a "new Israel," a religious community, the ( ) or the church. This leads directly into the difficult New Testament concept of time. As Christians we believe that the event of Jesus Christ was a superimposition of the Eternal upon the Temporal. Throughout the New Testament there runs a very real tension between present and future; what is now and what is to be. There can be no doubt that Jesus felt the Kingdom was at hand; that in his person the Kingdom of God was present. In tension with this is the equally present certainty that the Kingdom is coming. But I think it is a grave mistake to interpret this entirely eschatalogically. The Kingdom was present, the disciples were already a witness to it--if not

a part of it; and in the same line the ( ) was present too. Everything that comes afterward; i.e. the growth of the Kingdom and Church; will grow out of the once-and-for-all event involving Jesus Christ and the small community. This does not, in any sense of the word, deny the simultaneous presence of these two entities at the time Jesus spoke the words.

The church was indeed built on Peter; but Peter the disciple who was brought by God to make the amazing confession. The church was built on all the disciples who later would lmake this affirmation[1]; if they were not already making it. The New Testament words, at least to me, carry no note of exclusiveness. Peter is the Rock upon which the church will be built--but not necessarily to the exclusion of the other disciples.

His powers also are not exclusive. In this passage he is given the powers of binding and loosing. In Mt. 18:18 the same powers are given to all the disciples. Surely it is not impossible that Jesus granted these powers in exactly this way; i.e. to Peter first and then to the others. I am reminded that this is precisely the way the Resurrection appearances are recorded. The powers are "binding and loosing," rabbinical terms for forbidding and permitting. It appears that these are very practical, legal powers and that their exercise in the present Kingdom will take shape in the (This, Of course, did happen. Peter and the disciples were the leaders of the early church, and we can fairly assume that when

situations arose calling for "binding and loosing" they were the ones to do it. They would have been the most logical ones to lead and decide--simply because they had been close to Jesus before his death.

That the powers here granted to Peter, and later to the others, are eternal powers to be passed in apostolic succession is very simply not a part of the Matthean narrative. Very obviously they are powers given to disciples of Jesus with no hint of a line of "successors to Peter." Protestants traditionally back away from this passage because of the Roman interpretation that is assumed to be there; but in fact, is not.

We are today, a part of the Church of Jesus Christ, a Church which claims to be Apostolic. That the church was built on Peter and the apostles is not a matter of debate. Who but they knew our Lord both before and after his death and resurrection? Who proclaimed the good news, alone, to a pagan and hostile world? Who founded and nurtured congregations of confessing Christians, Where before there had been none? After this study I have no hesitancy in affirming that the early apostles are the very foundation upon which the church has been built. When it is not; when it backs away from its apostolic origins the church becomes something other than that which grew out of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

I apologize for the excessive length of this paper and yet I know that this experience has been and will continue to be immensely helpful to me. My treatment of some subjects has been cursory and perhaps irresponsible, in lieu of the veritable sea of ink spilled over the passage. I do not feel that I now know all there is to

about the passage, but I do feel that I have come to much more intimate grips with it than I ever have before. My only regret is that a normal life-time is not enough to do this same thing from Genesis to Revelation.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Campbell, A Theological Word Book of the Bible; ed. Alan Richardson. (Macmillan Co., New York 1960), p. 232.

[2]Arndt & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. (University of Chicago Press & Cambridge University Press: Chicago 1957), p. 39

[3]Campbell, op. cite., p. 45.

[4]Major, Manson, & Wright, The Mission and Message of Jesus. (E.P. Dutton and Col, New York, 1938).

[5]Monetfiore, The Synoptic Gospels. Vol, II. (Macmilland Co., London 1927).

[6]Cullman, Oscar, Peter. (SCM Press LTD, London, 1953).

[7]Ibid, p. 189.

[8]Ibid., p. 191.

[9]Flew, Jesus and His Church. (Abingdon, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago 1938).

[10]Cullman, op. cite., p. 196.

[11]Allen, International Critical Commentary; "St. Matthew" (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1907), pp. 176-77.

[12]Flew, op. cite., p. 132.

[13]Campbell, op. cite., p. 44.

[14]Major, Manson & Wright, op. cite., pp.493-97.

[15]Ibid., p. 494.

[16]Ibid., p. 496

[17]Allen, op. cite., p. 180.

[18]Montefiore, op. cite., p. 236.

[19]Cullman, op. cite., pp. 170-71

[20]Flew, op. cite., p. 124f.

[21]Major, op. cite., p. 109.

[22]Manson, op. cite., p. 496.

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